

**MINUTES
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF CORRECTIONS
QUARTERLY MEETING
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING
MEETING ROOM #113
THURSDAY, MAY 14, 1998
9:00 A.M.**

Board Members Present: Darlene Tussing, Chair
Linda Steinman
Kathy Campbell
Larry Hudkins
Steve Svoboda

Others Present: Mike Thurber, Corrections Director
Liz Thanel, Business Manager
Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer
Ann Taylor, County Clerk's Office

Darlene Tussing, Chair, opened the Board of Corrections meeting.

AGENDA ITEM:

1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 30, 1997 BOARD OF CORRECTIONS MEETING

MOTION: Campbell moved and Hudkins seconded approval of the minutes. On call Campbell, Hudkins, Steinman and Svoboda voted aye. Tussing abstained from voting. Motion carried.

2 POPULATION STATISTICS

a. Population Comments

Mike Thurber, Corrections Director, noted that the current trend of longer length of stays reflects an increase in violent types of crimes being committed.

b. Corrections Statistical Report

Thurber briefly reviewed population statistics for the Jail and the Lancaster Correctional Facility (LCF). Thurber noted that the decrease of 4.3% for the first quarter was primarily due to a decrease in sentencing at LCF over the year-end holiday season.

3 SPECIAL REPORT ON REVENUES

a. Report by Liz Thanel, Business Manager

Liz Thanel, Business Manager, briefly reviewed the Correction Department's Projected Revenues FY99 (Exhibit B), reporting that total revenue in the amount of \$1,840,000 is projected. She noted that City housing is anticipated to increase 36% in FY99. Their housing rate for FY99 is currently calculated at \$60.56, an increase from the current rate of \$55.63. Thanel also reported that the City will be reimbursing the Corrections Department \$28,000 for housing in the current year, due to an under billing.

Thanel reported that housing of Federal prisoners has been limited to the 17 beds which the County is mandated to provide, due to high population figures. She noted that the current Federal housing rate is \$64.96.

Thanel stated that the projected figure of \$180,000 for telephone commissions includes a \$30,000 guaranteed annual minimum commission.

In response to a question from Hudkins, Thurber stated that most inmates in the work release program receive wages in the \$7 - \$9 range. He also noted that State Statutes only allow charges for meals and laundry to be assessed for inmates in the work release program.

Thanel also reviewed a graph of Revenue Collections FY93 - FY99 (Exhibit B), noting the potential for an additional \$500,000 in revenue in Fiscal Year 2000 due to LB 695, which changes State reimbursement to counties for housing of prisoners who are ultimately sentenced to State facilities or placed on probation.

4 OTHER ITEMS

a. Lincoln General Hospital Task Force

Thurber reported that the Corrections Department had requested that the Healthier Lincoln Committee consider funding of programming and medical testing for offenders from monies received from the sale of Lincoln General Hospital. Included in the request were:

- ▶ TB testing for lodged offenders
- ▶ Hepatitis A-B-C testing for lodged offenders
- ▶ HIV/AIDS programs for offenders
- ▶ Mandated chemical dependency treatment for sentenced offenders
- ▶ Expanded mental health treatment and housing for repeat offenders

Campbell suggested that if mentally ill offenders could be placed in a hospital setting, rather than incarcerated, the cost burden could be shifted to Medicaid.

Campbell requested that Thurber research whether Douglas County incarcerates or hospitalizes their mentally ill prisoners and report back to the Board.

Thurber noted that an Emergency Protective Custody (EPC) hospital placement for a mentally ill offender would require a Mental Health Board hearing.

b. Domestic Violence

Thurber reported that the Corrections Department received \$560 through the Violence Against Women Act Grant for the purpose of acquiring the Duluth Model Education Program for Men Who Batter.

c. Lancaster Correctional Facility Heating/Air Conditioning System

Thurber reported that the Corrections Department is currently investigating the cost and benefits of replacing the heating/air conditioning system in the Lancaster Correctional Facility (LCF) with a ground-coupled system. Thurber noted that Energy grants may be a possible source of funding for the system.

d. Offender Transport

Thurber reported that 2,037 County and City offenders were transported by Corrections staff to the various courts and 138 offenders were transported to other locations, including the following:

- ▶ State facilities
- ▶ Medical agencies
- ▶ Crisis Center
- ▶ Department of Public Institutions (DPI)

e. Lancaster Correctional Facility (LCF) Construction Program Activities

Thurber reported that Lancaster Correctional Facility (LCF) construction crews moved various County and City offices to temporary and permanent locations and cleared the old County-City Building of surplus property and debris.

f. Outside Contracts

Thurber reported that the U.S. Marshals Service has requested the Corrections Department to provide TB testing and in-house dental services for federal offenders in custody. This would be in addition to their current daily rate.

Thurber reported that Aramark Services, food service provider, has requested that the per-meal price of \$1.124 remain the same for the upcoming year. He noted that Detox and the Attention Center have been apprised of the request, and have not registered any objections.

g. Recruitment/Training Activities

Thurber reported that ten full-time correctional officers were hired from a pool of 104 applicants for positions within the department.

Thurber also reported that initial training was conducted for 9 on-call and 11 full-time correctional officers and 61 staff members were re-certified in advanced CPR training.

h. Litigation Pending

Thurber reported that there is still litigation pending against the firm that constructed the addition to the Lancaster Correctional Facility (LCF) in 1992. He stated that cost estimates for replacement or jacking of the floor in the facility were being provided to Doug Cyr, Deputy County Attorney for use in settlement negotiations.

In response to a question from Steinman, Thurber stated that completion of programming of the new Inmate Management System is projected for the end of May, with on-line status projected for the end of December, 1999.

5 NEW BUSINESS

a. U.S. Marshal Request

Thurber reported that the U.S. Marshall's Service is seeking additional lodging for 250 federal offenders over the next few years and has requested Lancaster County to provide housing for an additional 48 federal prisoners. He stated that the federal government has expressed a willingness to provide up-front funding in the range of 2-4 million dollars for jail expansion to assist in fulfilling that need.

In response to a questions from Campbell and Tussing, Thurber stated that the space currently utilized by the Probation Department and Administration would not be suitable for secure housing, but could provide additional space for medical beds, thereby freeing up secure beds. He also noted that expanding the Airpark Correctional facility would not be cost effective in terms of staffing requirements for two maximum security facilities.

Thurber suggested that this may be an opportune time for the County to investigate alternatives to incarceration to meet the future needs of the County.

In response to a question from Dave Kroeker, Budget & Fiscal Officer, Thurber stated that the federal government would not fund a population study, but there may be funds available for alternative studies from other sources such as the American Jail Association (AJA), American Correctional Association (ACA) or National Institute of Corrections (NIC).

Campbell suggested that the Norm Cox & Associates' Population Analysis and Projection of Future Bed Needs, conducted in conjunction with the construction of the Jail facility, be reviewed and replicated to meet current needs.

Thurber stated that the U.S. Marshall's Service would like to have a Letter of Interest from the Board.

MOTION: Campbell moved and Hudkins seconded to respond by letter to the U.S. Marshall's Service request, stating that the Board's process is to conduct a population study, replicating the original study conducted by Norm Cox and Associates, and to complete an analysis of the community, including as one component of that process, the federal government's need for additional housing of prisoners, noting in the letter that anticipated completion of the analysis is in 18-24 months, with the Board's review of that analysis at that time and additionally to request financial assistance from the U.S. Marshall's Service for the community analysis. On call Campbell, Hudkins, Steinman, Svoboda and Tussing voted aye. Motion carried.

Thurber agreed to assist Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer, with drafting the letter to the U.S. Marshall's Service.

6 ADJOURNMENT

Tussing adjourned the Board of Corrections meeting.

Kandra Hahn
Lancaster County Clerk